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COMOR-M-24

COMMITTEE ON OVERHEAD RECONNAISSANCE

Minutes of Meeting Held in Room 429
 Matomic Building, Central Intelligence Agency
 at 12:30 pm, 4 May 1961

PRESIDING

James Q. Reber
 Chairman

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. H. M. Wiedemann, State
 Col. J. E. Mahon, JCS
 Lt. Col. J. W. Morris, OACSI
 Lt. Cdr. R. E. Pyle, ONI

Maj. G. S. Chapman, AFCIN
 [redacted] NSA
 [redacted] CIA

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CONSULTANTS PRESENT

Lt. Col. W. C. Herrington, JCS
 Maj. S. J. Moran, AFCIN

[redacted]
 Mr. F. A. Voigt, CIA

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Photographic Coverage of South China in Connection with the Laotian Crisis.

1. The Chairman explained that this special meeting had been called in order to insure that the views of the COMOR were as reported in the minutes of COMOR-M-20, paragraph 2, dated 21 April, inasmuch as there had been rapid changes recently. He stated that the immediate stimulus arose from the fact that a high-level policy group was about to consider the question of approval this afternoon. To facilitate discussion the Chairman tabled copies of [redacted] which was drawn from COMOR-Minutes-19 and 20.

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2. The Committee reviewed the intelligence circumstances at the moment as they would affect the COMOR recommendations for urgent coverage of the areas North and East of the North Vietnam border and Hainan Island. It was agreed that the memorandum might be improved by inserting "adequate" in the first sentence of paragraph 2 so that it would

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read: "U.S. Forces are lacking adequate current intelligence on the staging areas . . ." (the addition underlined). It was also believed that paragraph 2 might well be paragraph 1, and the former paragraph 1 be further down in the memorandum, modified to read: "In addition there is insufficient information on whether or not . . ."

3. Even if it might be necessary to revise the memorandum later, it was recognized that at the moment the question was whether the members believed that the coverage which was recommended should be on an urgent basis or otherwise. It was the strong view of the JCS, Army, Navy and Air Force that the coverage was urgently needed. The NSA indicated that it did not require urgent coverage to carry out its functions. The State Department and CIA believed that coverage was desirable but not required on an urgent basis. The Chairman stated that he would forward these views to the Director for his use at the special meeting this afternoon.

4. Colonel Mahon and Colonel Herrington in the course of the discussion stated that the JCS was most unhappy that a recommendation for urgent action on 11 April and reaffirmed on 21 April should only be the subject of action on 4 May. They understood on those dates the Chairman had forwarded the COMOR views in accordance with the normal procedure but felt that CIA should not have delayed placing this recommendation before the responsible political authorities. They agreed to forego further discussion of this until the meeting tomorrow.

JAMES Q. REBER

Chairman

Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance

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- 18--TSO CIA
- 19--C/DMD/NPIC
- 20--C/DMD/NPIC
- 21--DDP TCO
- 22--Intel Staff/DPD
- 23--SO/DPD
- 24-26-- -C/SRS/DPD/DDP

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